



From: Peter Burns
Sent: Sunday, 6 January 2013 11:10 AM
To: Electoral Reform
Subject: compulsory attendance at the polling booth

I oppose the suggested change to the electoral law in Queensland. Commonly spoken of as "compulsory voting", the law is rather a matter of an obligation to register the individual citizen's attendance at the polling booth. Such attendance serves as a check that no other person has exercised the citizen's right. No one can be punished by law for what he or she does to, or with, the ballot paper(s) provided only that no public mischief occurs.

There is a myth that, in a democracy, we all are involved in the decisions of parliament and the making of the laws. The closest that myth comes to reality is in the current arrangement: by voting / attending a place of voting, the citizen agrees to be bound by the system, agrees to obey the laws, agrees to accept the result of the election. This last agreement is important: ultimately every one accepts the arrangement. (The successful candidate wins - ultimately wins {when all the preferences have been distributed - not 50 per cent, but 100 per cent, of the vote. Unsuccessful candidates and their supporters may not be happy with the outcome of an election but they have, by their participation in the process, bound themselves to accept the rules. They agree to abide by the system until the next time of election. This is an important myth. Nothing should be done to diminish its force.